

Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission

Indiana Government Center South

402 W. Washington St Conference A Indianapolis, In 46204

March 11, 2009, 1:00pm

Voting Member Present:

Adams County – John Friedt
Carroll County - George Mears
Cass County – Janet Fawley
DNR – Dale Brier
Huntington County – Dave Hacker
Knox County - Shane Cooper
Parke County – Penny Cox
Posey County - Ralph Weinzapfel
Sullivan County - John J. Gettinger
Vigo County - Keith Ruble (alternate)
Wabash County - Michael Beauchamp
Warren County – Louise Jewell

Proxy Voters Present:

Miami County - Debbie Browsher

Guests:

Don Jewell – Warren County

Non-Voting Members Present:

Jaime Fry - Office of Tourism
Frank Hurdis – DNR, Historic Preservation

Voting Members Absent w/o Proxy:

Allen County - Ron Zartman
Tippecanoe County – Lucky Neiburger
Vermillion County - James McFall
Gibson County - N. Sherrell Marginet
Fountain County - vacant
Jay County - Faron Parr
Wells County – Keith Huffman

Commission and DNR staff Present:

Ron James – WHRCC Executive Director
Jewell Baxter - DNR

Call to Order, Receipt of Proxies and Introductions

Order called at 1:15 p.m. Dale Brier announced proxies: Jim McFall gave Vermillion County's to the president, Keith Huffman Wells County's to Dave Hacker, and Ken Einselen Miami County's to Debbie Browsher. All present were asked to introduce themselves.

Review and Approval of January 14, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Shane Cooper moved the 1/14/09 minutes approved as written, Dave H. 2nd, passed.

President's Report

John Gettinger reported on his attendance at an R.C. & D. leadership conference in Washington, D.C., as well as his attendance at the informational meetings regarding the Army's disposition of their Newport Chemical Depot in Vermillion County. About 1% of this 7000 acre base extends east from SR 63 down to and along the Wabash. He is hoping for cooperation with the Vermillion County Park Board, DNR – Fish & Wildlife, Banks of the Wabash, and others to retain this acreage in public use for an access point, trails and possibly a Water Trail camp.

John noted also a stimulus meeting in Evansville. He and Ralph Weinzapfel met with the Southern Indiana University Vice President in charge of Historic New Harmony and, more to their point, the Wabash River Heritage Paddle Fest. They urged that the event not be put on "hiatus" but be run as a less expensive event. John believes this is how it will occur this year.

Finally, John noted, his efforts with John Gregg notwithstanding, we are still looking for someone to be honorary chair of the 1812 – 2012 Commemoration.

Executive Director's Report

Ron James referred to his written reports from 9/6/08-1/2/09 and displayed another covering the 1/3/09 to 2/25/09 period. Most Commission work has been on planning for our DeTrash the Wabash event, pursuing the Newport Chemical Depot acreage, and pushing the mineral royalties bill, HB 1032. The Greater Lafayette Reach of the Wabash Sec. 319 coordinator will address us at the May meeting in Lafayette while the annual membership meeting and awards luncheon of the Banks of the Wabash will be in West Lafayette on 4/15/09. Ron noted the recent addition of the Commission to SB 524, the creation of the Dept. of Indiana Culture and Heritage. Ron asked for meetings with county Boards of Commissioners and sketched his agenda at these meetings.

Finance Report

Dale B. has not heard anything different about the commission's budget starting July 1; the 2009-2011 budget of \$80,246.00 per year. For the fiscal year ending June 30, the balance was \$9945.27, with a few outstanding bills such as the Corridor Citizen Award and membership dues of \$250 each for the Banks of the Wabash and NICHES. Dale noted the average cost for meeting travel is ~\$700. He also made mention that there has been no signed renewal of the utilities only lease for the office in Lafayette. The commission owes ~\$800 on these utilities.

Committee Reports

Legislation: John G. said that Rep. Dale Grubb has found a senate sponsor for House Bill 1032. This bill sets up a grant fund for the Wabash from royalties arising from mineral extraction under the river. Senator Hershman is sponsoring the bill and has agreed to request Senator Mishler, chair of the Senate's Natural Resources committee, hear HB 1032 to keep it moving. [At one point, John G. and George M. left our meeting (Dave H. appointed as president pro tem) to meet with Senator Mishler at the State House and returned with his assurance HB 1032 would be heard in his committee.]

John G. brought up the effort to take the WRHCC out of the DNR and put it with a new Department of Indiana History and Culture; Senate Bill 524. Ron J. outlined SB 524's scope and what divisions would be included in the new department: Historic Preservation and Archeology, State Museums, Historical Sites, the Historical Bureau, the Commission on Public Records, the State Library, the WRHCC and State House Tour Office. Dale B. noted that DNR is in favor of the bill and that there would not be much change for the commission (he would still be interested due to our outdoor recreation programs) though no DNR connection is maintained in the bill. Discussion of the WRHCC mission (I.C. 14-13-6-16), its natural resources and recreation programs, temporary disruption from change, the focus of prior grant funding, future funding, etc., was held. The DNR is listed as the administrator of the Corridor Fund under HB 1032 even though, if SB 524 passes, the Commission would no longer have ties to DNR. Frank Hurdis noted that the bill has been a proposal for about 8 years and that Senator Merritt, being a history buff, wants archeology, history and cultural activities more visible. Norman Neiburger moved that, if a hearing is held on SB 524, the Commission should appear in opposition, Janet Fawley 2nd, passed with 2 opposed. Janet F. moved that, at any hearing on SB 524, the Commission request its removal from the Bill, Mike Beauchamp 2nd, passed with one abstention.

Dale B. mentioned that a non-voting member was added to the WRHCC, by recently noted 2005 legislation, from the Indiana Economic Development Corporation. The Chief Officer was invited to attend this meeting and will be added to our meeting mail list.

Signage Mike B. stated that his reliance on the Banks chapter to procure the Tow Path Trail blade signs is causing a delay in putting up the River Road signs in Wabash County. Ron J. reminded all that River Road decals for blade signs are available. Ralph W. reported Posey County "River Road" is fully marked. Dave H. noted Huntington County "River Road" is close to finished. Posey did not use "Towpath Trail" as it is too far south to have had canal bed.

Dave H. noted Huntington put their Community signs on the mayor's "Welcome" sign. Ron noted this placement, as well as service club kiosks, seems to work out. The rejection of Ken E's request, to post "Corridor" signs on SR bridges, by his district state highway superintendent was noted. Ron J. noted we bought enough "Corridor" signs for every county bridge. River Commissioners need only approval from their county commissioners for those. Ken E. has designed brackets for sign mounts in most situations.

Water Trail Maps 2 map edits out of 19 have been received. We will be completely out of some of the maps this season. Ron J. noted we will save money if all 9 maps are run as a set. A discussion of the new or updated information requested of each county was held. Requested are the locations and distances to amenities within walking distance of each formal access. Amenities may be anything the county desires listed such as food, gas, lodging, potable water, bath facilities, camping, historical marker, scenic overlook, or entertainment venue.

4th Edition Brochure We have 117 boxes at 400 brochures per box on hand. Dale B. notes \$23k allocated for map and brochure printing in capitol fund. Janet F. moved the brochure edit deadline to May 13, Keith Ruble 2nd, passed.

Banks of the Wabash, Inc. Debbie Browsher read Ken E's notes updating us on BOW meetings and activities: 1) funding for Ron J. to attend the National River Rally in Baltimore, using the Wabash Odyssey Art money donated in the Corridor's name, was approved; 2) a revamp of banksofthewabash.org is in the works; 3) BOW applied for a grant from the DeHahn Foundation; 4) the lease of www.Wabashriver.us was not approved; 5) BOW has not received any correspondence concerning 1812 commemoration bicentennial chapter; and, 6) the annual meeting for BOW will be 10 a.m. April 15, 2009 at the West Lafayette Public Library.

Indiana Rivers Rally The next IN Rivers Rally organizing meeting is to be held March 23 at 9 a.m. at the Farm Bureau Building in Indianapolis. The state association of Soil and Water Districts, Elizabeth Trybula, has been taking initial leadership.

1812 Bicentennial Shane C. reported on plans to meet in Tippecanoe at the end of the month to set a schedule and take a driving tour of the route Harrison took in 1811. A catalogue of still existing sites and a new map of the trail will be produced. John G. stated the Merom Improvement Assoc. pledged \$250 for this program, in addition to the Banks' \$500 donation.

Old Business

New Harmony Bridge Status Frank H. said that Dr. Glass has heard nothing further on the bridge plans. Ralph Weinzapfel noted that revenue has dropped over the winter.

River Rally 2009 in Baltimore Ron J noted a need for direction as to his time spent furthering Wabash River business while attending the national River Rally. Ralph W. moved the Commission insist Ron J. attend this conference, George Mears 2nd, the motion passed.

State Fair Jamie Fox reported that Visit Indiana Day is not happening this year but there will be stage presentation opportunities. She will email Ron J. the information for him to seek a time.

River Culture No report.

November 11 Meeting Change Since government buildings will not be open on the Veteran's Day holiday, Dave H. moved to change the regularly scheduled meeting to November 4th at the IGCS, Indianapolis, Keith Ruble 2nd, the motion passed.

Fiscal Year End Ron J asked for the direction of the members as to purchases and disbursements felt necessary as the fiscal year winds down, noting that we have furthered our mission in past years by joining or supporting nonprofit organizations and festivals along the corridor. Incurred or to be paid amounts included: ~\$1100 for office rent; \$620 in invoices received; and ~\$1200 for member travel. Other expenditures might include: sign mounting tools, the most expensive of which would be a powder-driven nail gun; a replacement, higher resolution camera; a replacement laptop; land trust memberships; festival & trip supports such as Paddle Fest and the 8th Grade Raft Trip; other nonprofits

of the Corridor such as trails, paddling, or historical preservation groups; and conference sponsorship, such as the October MATAG in Kalamazoo. Ron J. also suggested some sort of promotional item for booth visitors be purchased. The incurring of ongoing or monthly expense in the future, including a “seat charge” for computer maintenance, an increased Verizon bill for a mobile internet link, continuing office rent/utilities, etc., was discussed. Janet F. moved that all tools and supplies be purchased 1st, then \$1000 to sponsor the Banks of the Wabash, Inc.’s “Mini-Grant” program; then \$100 memberships in the 5 land trusts on the corridor, Keith R. 2nd; the motion passed. Dale B. noted this might leave some funding available. John Friedt moved that the Commission fund everything mentioned to the extent groups provide Dale B. with the necessary W-9/Direct Deposit Authority and invoice before our next meeting, 2nd by Dave H., the motion passed.

Paddle Fest/USI-Historic New Harmony Ralph W. stated that even if USI put their status as host on “hiatus”, New Harmony or Grayville expect to put on some sort of Heritage Paddle Fest on the 3rd Saturday in August. John G. reported Ralph and he were working on receiving an accounting of past events with an eye to our assisting with this year’s event.

Calendar for Attendance John G. and Ron J. will go to the national River Rally in May. Ron noted other scheduled summer events, including W. Lafayette’s River Fest, 7/11/09; the Indiana State Fair where Ron hopes to show our film as a stage presentation; Clinton’s Little Italy Festival and Ft. Wayne’s Mosquito Fest. The State Fair theme is the “Year of the Tomato” sponsored by Red Gold (a Wabash River valley business in Adams County). John G. again stressed to the members that they need to schedule Ron for their county Board of Commissioners to keep them updated and get necessary approval for our sign programs.

Contract for Services - Executive Director Dale B. noted the services contract expires at the end of October, though there is an automatic renewal clause if the Commission and Ron J. wish to renew. Preparations need to begin now for any change. Janet asked for a copy by next meeting. The E.D. pay level, the lack of pay for travel/expenses, and Ron’s current health, were discussed. Dave H. moved to renew with no changes, Keith R. 2nd, and the motion was approved.

Newport Depot Dale B. noted that DNR – Fish and Wildlife wishes to take ownership of a large number of the Federal Government’s surplus acres at Newport, including the river frontage. They incorporated our letter of interest (prepared and sent by Ron J.) and wish to work with us if they are successful. Ron noted we got a lot of support from across the State.

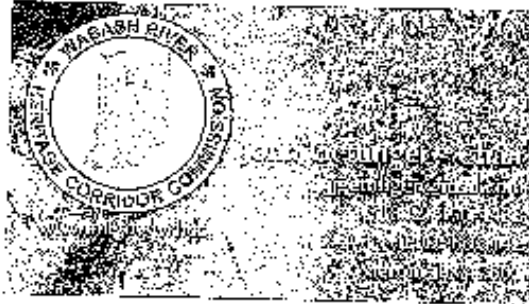
Announcements & General Discussion Federal Floodplain Easement; Stimulus payments

Next Meeting is May 13, 2009 at 1pm in Lafayette’s Big 4 Depot on Second St. Adjourned at 4:05pm.

Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission
Executive Director's Report – 1/3/09 – 2/25/09 Submitted by Ron James

- ◆ Submit Exec.Dir. Report for 1/14/09 meeting; discuss budget change & opportunities with Dale B.
- ◆ Consult with Exec. Dir of Little River Wetlands Project re: implied easements in purchased real estate
- ◆ Discussion with Derek Reuter re: GreenerIndiana.com webpage & plans, 1/6/09
- ◆ Follow HB 1032 Corridor Fund/Royalties legislation; phone & email information providing contacts
- ◆ Various phone calls and conferences re: office space in Lafayette and replacement space options
- ◆ Review Newport Depot closing notice & research federal surplus property procedures
- ◆ Review & comment upon Greater Lafayette Wabash Watershed orientation for Coordinator Sara Peel
- ◆ Payee analysis, claims comparisons for budget cut absorption; discuss with John G.
- ◆ Phone canvas of representatives to promote meeting attendance, 1/9, 1/12 & 1/13/09
- ◆ Contact River Network re: River Rally workshop presentation and attendance concerns, 1/13/09
- ◆ Travel & attend Commission meeting, Indianapolis, 1/14/09; signage distribution
- ◆ Invite W.R.E.C.'s Stanton Lambert and Sara Peel to present at May Corridor meeting, 1/15/09
- ◆ Research re: various legislative issues for members (bottle deposit, clean water, septic density, budget)
- ◆ Research, prepare and provide executive summary and pro forma House letter for members, 1/19 & 1/22/09
- ◆ Banks of the Wabash agenda review, arrangements; travel and attend BOW board in Covington, 1/21/09
- ◆ Obtain H.E.C. support, phone conf. re: Natural Resources Committee unanimous positive result re: HB 1032
- ◆ Re-write House pro forma and send to members for use for 2nd and 3rd reading efforts
- ◆ Travel & attend "Third House" meeting with N.E. IN legislators; conference with D. Leonard, 1/24/09
- ◆ Comment on and transmit to chair(s) brochure and water trail maps edits and changes, as received
- ◆ Produce information brochures and arrange appointments with co-sponsors of HB 1032, John G., Ken E.
- ◆ Travel & attend Conservation Day; obtain HB 1032 support from State Div.-IWLA, 1/27/09
- ◆ Emails and calendar for Upper Wabash Nutrient/CTIC, Towpath Trail Chap., LRWP strategic plan meetings
- ◆ Prepare and submit response to River Network request re: urban watersheds, 1/29/09
- ◆ Research and obtain Oil & Gas Div. breakdown of royalties received by river and county, 1/30/09
- ◆ Administrative efforts with representatives of DNR, Outdoor Rec. office, et al. – web access/password lock
- ◆ Calendar & office organization for February calendar; begin brochure shipping and festival calendar research
- ◆ Research, prepare and provide pro forma Senate letter for members, 2/6/09
- ◆ Email and comment re: Ken E. effort and InDOT response re: corridor sign placement, bridge availability
- ◆ Create and edit minutes of 1/14 meeting from transcription
- ◆ Travel & attend Upper Wabash River Basin Commission meeting, Bluffton, Wells County, 2/10/09
- ◆ Teleconference with State Div., Izaak Walton League legislative comm. and lobbyist re: HB 1032 and agenda
- ◆ Telephone conference with Margy D. re: cultural/arts project committee meeting, 2/10/09
- ◆ Receive, review & reply for Michael B. re: brochure edit – Wabash County; Senate argument for Dave H.
- ◆ Request, follow-up and attain Canal Interpretive Center for BOW board meeting (with Ken E.)
- ◆ Prepare and submit re-draft for UWRBC mini-grant application to BOW board, Stacia H., 2/12/09
- ◆ Research & convey legislative agenda status to Commissioners, at intervals
- ◆ Write Senate pro forma and send to members for use, 2/13/09
- ◆ Travel & attend De-Trash the Wabash – Tippecanoe organizational meeting, W. Lafayette, 2/17/09
- ◆ Travel & attend Banks of the Wabash board meeting, Delphi, 2/18/09
- ◆ Travel & meet with Sara Peel of Greater Lafayette Reach of the Wabash Watershed, 2/18/09
- ◆ Travel & attend Tippecanoe SWCD annual meeting, State Conservationist speech, 2/18/09
- ◆ Edit & Finalize Minutes, Agenda, Proxy & Public Notice for March Commission meeting, 2/20/09
- ◆ Research Wm. H. Harrison campaigns, 1811 – 1813, begin preparation of calendar requests
- ◆ Prepare and submit response to River Network request re: non-traditional buffer protection, 2/23/09
- ◆ Prepare and submit suggestions on Upper Wabash visioning project, with Stacia H., 2/24/09
- ◆ Prepare and request Commissioner's consideration of purchasing priorities, 2/25/09
- ◆ Recap activities for Executive Director's Report through 2/26/09

President's Report



- 1-14 Indi Snow
- 1-19 Farmersburg Busserson
- 1-20 Clinton Newport Chemical Depot
- 1-21 74-63 Banks of Wabash
- 1-27 Indi Conservation Day
- 2-31 Sullivan John Gregg - 1812
- 2-2 Sullivan Conservation A. meeting
- 2-8-11 Washington D.C. Leadership Conf.
- 2- Sullivan Brad Ellsworth River trips
- 2-17 Sullivan River talk
- 2-24 Indi Borders + Watermen
- 2-29 Evansville Stimulus Bill -
- 3-1 Greencastle Newport Chemical Depot
- 3-10 Eugene Wabash Community
- 3-31 Indi -----